A tender moment
spent enjoying sights
never before seen
Chapter 1 part 2
The Queen's Flight
The Beast Player
獣の奏者
UEHASHI NAHOKO
TAKEMOTO ITOE

Chapter 1 part2
The Queen's Flight

Perk
Chirp
Chirp
Clatter
Clatter
OH!
YOU'RE AWAKE.

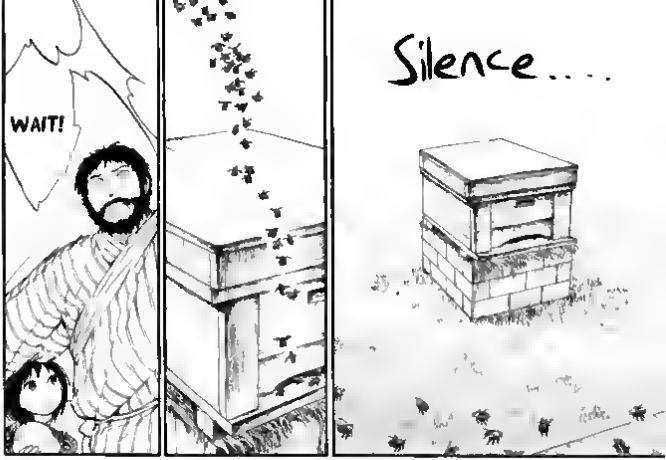
BUT YOU DON'T TAKE LONG TO GET BETTER
YOU CHILDREN OFTEN RUN FEVERS,
HMM...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUTSIDE?
YOU LOOK MUCH BETTER TODAY
NOD NOD
WHAT'S THIS?
...?
HERE TAKE THESE
C'MON,
I CAN'T WAIT TILL YOU SEE THEM.
PROTECTIVE GEAR, TO KEEP YOU SAFE FROM MY PETS.

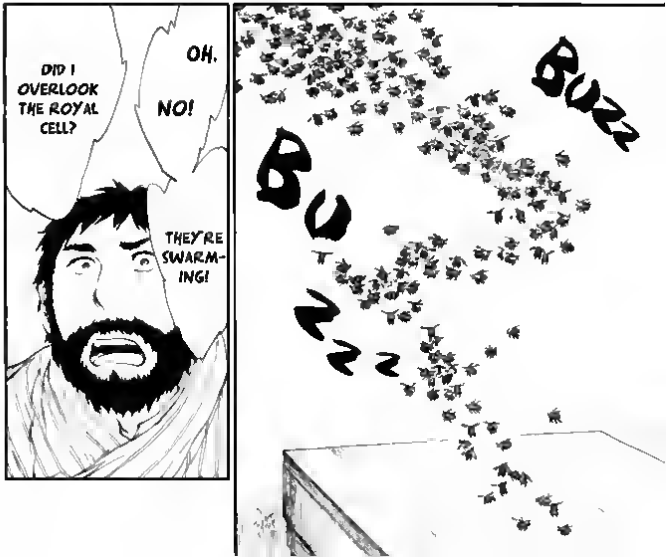
!
IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING THE AFON NOA?
...
Nod

THAT'S THE WALL THAT SEPARATES THE WORLD OF MORTALS FROM THE WORLD OF DEITIES.
THE YOJE'S ANCESTORS USED TO LIVE THERE
YOU KNOW, THE LAND OF GODS.
I'VE HEARD ABOUT IT.
MOTHER TOLD ME THE STORY.
THE AFON NOA?

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M REALLY SEEING IT.
OOH
WHICH WOULD DIVIDE THE WORLD OF GODS AND THE WORLD OF MORTALS.
TO MAKE UP THE DIVINE RANGE.
LONG, LONG AGO, THE GODS BUILT TALL MOUNTAINS
YES.
BUT FIRST, I'M TAKING YOU TO SEE MY PETS
IT'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE, SEE? YOU CAN LOOK AT IT AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE LATER
THE APON NOA HAS BEEN THERE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME
THEY'LL FALL OUT
IF YOU OPEN YOUR EYES ANY WIDER,
CHUCKLE

WHOA!
BUZZ


WAIT!
Silence....


DID I OVERLOOK THE ROYAL CELL?
OH. NO!
THEY'RE SWARMING!
BUZZ
BUZZZZ

EEK!
!
BUZZ
BUZZZZZ
GRAB
NOT SO FAST YOU DON'T WANT TO ALARM THEM
PUT THE HAT ON, SLOWLY
...
!
DON'T WORRY
SO LONG AS YOU DON'T MOVE,
THE BEES WON'T ATTACK YOU

BUZZ
SLOWLY
Whew
YOU CAN MOVE
WE'RE SAFE NOW
...
Phew
THEY'VE STOPPED MOVING?
BUZZ...

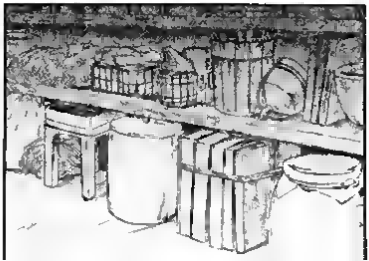
...
NOW THAT THEY'VE FOUND A BRANCH,
THEY'LL STAY THERE FOR ABOUT A HALF A DAY.
...
WHY...
ARE THEY ON THAT BRANCH?
DOES IT HAVE HONEY?
Pff

THERE'S A QUEEN?
THEY'RE LEAVING THEIR OLD COLONY TO PREPARE A NEW NEST FOR THEIR QUEEN.
NO.
THE QUEEN BEE LEAVES WITH ABOUT HALF THE WORKER BEES TO FORM A NEW COLONY.
WHEN A HIVE IS TOO CROWDED,
THE REST STAY WITH THE LARVA THAT WILL BECOME THE NEW QUEEN.
DIDN'T YOU SEE THE LARGE BEE, THE VERY LAST ONE TO FLY THERE?
THAT'S THE QUEEN BEE

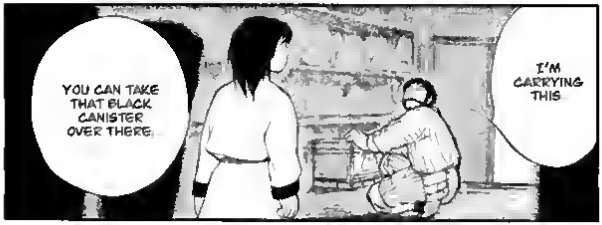
TO MAKE SURE THE QUEEN DOESN'T FLY FAR, I CLIP HER WINGS IN ADVANCE
It's not very nice, but it does the job.
IF I ALLOWED THAT TO HAPPEN, I'D HAVE NOTHING TO EAT.
SO ARE THEY GOING SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY?

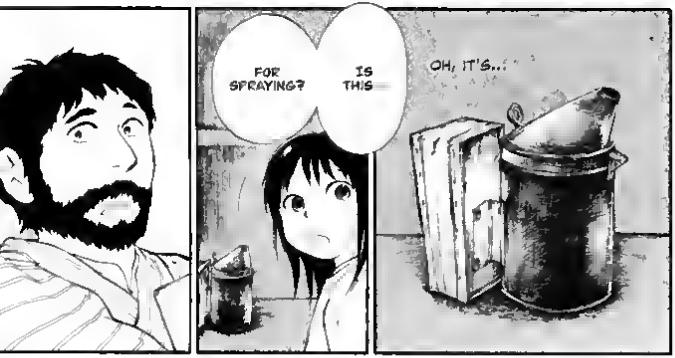
WHOA.
Heave

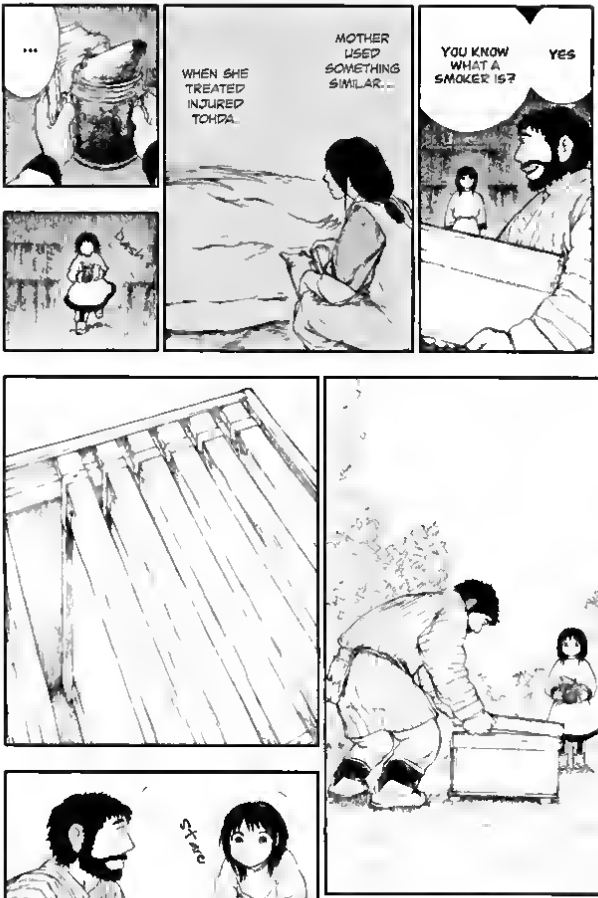
WELL, NOW
I HAVE TO SET UP A HIVE FOR THEM
HOW ABOUT GIVING ME A HAND?



THIS IS THE ONLY EMPTY ONE LEFT
I FORGOT
ACK


YOU CAN TAKE THAT BLACK CANISTER OVER THERE.
I'M CARRYING THIS


FOR SPRAYING?
IS THIS
OH, IT'S...


...
WHEN SHE TREATED INJURED TOHDA...
MOTHER USED SOMETHING SIMILAR...
YOU KNOW WHAT A SMOKER IS?
YES
Stare

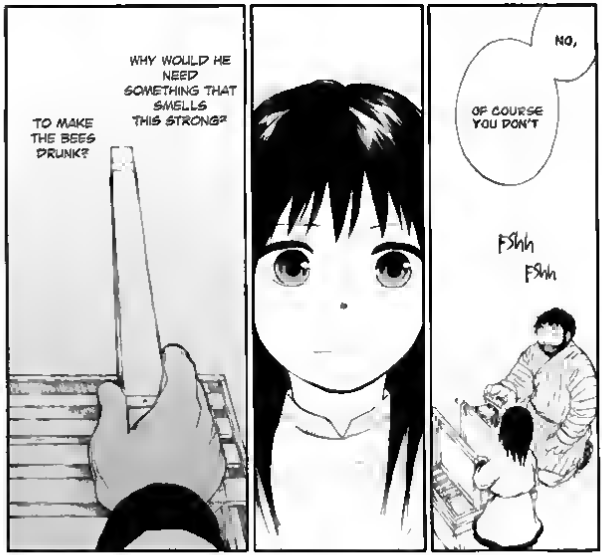
FSHH
FSHH
PASS ME THE SMOKER, PLEASE.
THESE ARE HIVE FRAMES
HOME FOR MY BEES.
OH, I GET IT!
YOU SPRAYED THE HIVE SO THE BEES WILL COME, RIGHT?
THEY'RE ATTRACTED TO THE SMELL OF FLOWERS
ISN'T IT?
LET'S HOPE THE BEES AGREE WITH US
...
WHAT A NICE SMELL!

HMM...
YOU SPEAK BEYOND YOUR YEARS
EH?
I'M TEN
JUST HOW OLD— ARE YOU?
—

THAT'S WHAT SAJU ONCE SAID TO ME.
Blush
YOU TALK LIKE A GROWN-UP, EZIN

I'M SORRY TO TELL YOU, THOUGH—
YOU GOT IT WRONG
FAR FROM IT I'M IMPRESSED
NOW, NOW I'M NOT CALLING YOU AN IMPERTINENT LITTLE THING

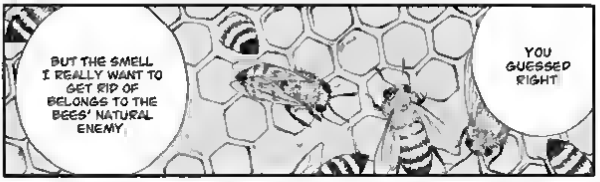
DO YOU KNOW WHY?
I HAVE ANOTHER REASON FOR SMOKING THE HIVE
THE SECRET TO MAKING THE BEES COME TO THIS HIVE IS SUGAR WATER,
WHICH I'LL SPRAY LATER


TO MAKE THE BEES DRUNK?
WHY WOULD HE NEED SOMETHING THAT SMELLS THIS STRONG?
NO,
OF COURSE YOU DON'T
FShh
FShh

ONLY THEN DID THEY PUT THE YOUNG ONE INTO THE POOL
WHEN AN OLD TOHDA DIED, MOTHER AND THE HERDSMEN COVERED A YOUNG TOHDA WITH THE DEAD ONE'S MUCUS
BEES' HOME...
STRONG SMELL...
GRR

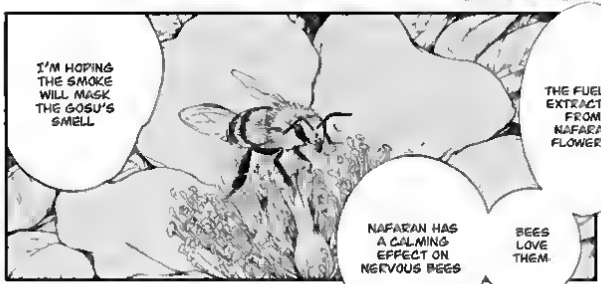
...
WHAT..
GAVE YOU THAT IDEA?
DID
OTHER BEES LIVE IN THIS HIVE BEFORE?
UNCLE JOH-UN
YES?

I WAS WONDERING, ARE YOU USING THE SMOKE SO THE NEW BEES DON'T SMELL THE OLD BEES?
...
!!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW!
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT
THE SMOKE IS FOR MASKING...
THE SMELL OF THE OLD BEES...
OH!
YOU'RE SMILING
IT'S A GOOD LOOK ON YOU.

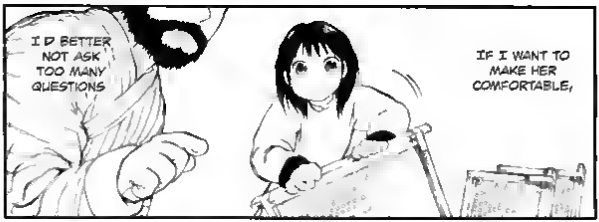


BUT BEES ARE SENSITIVE TO SMELLS.
I'VE ALREADY WASHED AND DRIED IT,
ONE TIME,
A GOSU* GOT INTO THE HIVE,
AND MY BEES ALL LEFT!
SNIFF SNIFF

※ A small frog that exudes a strong smell


I'M HOPING THE SMOKE WILL MASK THE GOSU'S SMELL
THE FUEL IS EXTRACTED FROM NAFARAN FLOWERS.
NAFARAN HAS A CALMING EFFECT ON NERVOUS BEES
BEES LOVE THEM.

shake
I HAVE TO HAND IT TO YOU YOU KNEW WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO
DOES YOUR FAMILY
KEEP BEES, TOO?
...
NOW
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE
SHE WAS FINALLY SMILING AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN,
AND YOU HAD TO MAKE HER ALL GLOOMY AGAIN.
HER FAMILY IS A SORE SUBJECT, LIKE A FRESH WOUND
I CAN'T HELP PRYING, THOUGH
I'M BURNING TO KNOW



* Bookkeeping information courtesy of Fujiwara Apiary in Iwate Prefecture.

To be continued in Kemono no Souja volume 11

Taking on a Challenge!

Kemono no Souja is fortunate to have a team of talented people breathe new life into it. The NHK animation has a legion of fans, who will—I hope—appreciate the differences depicted in this manga adaptation. And I'm sure fans of the novels will enjoy comparing the manga against the world they imagined from the text.

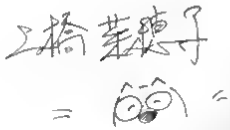
"What do I hope to achieve?" "How will I portray it?" To put it in plain words, these are issues an author has to tackle head-on. When adapting a novel into a manga, artists may deconstruct the original, make it their own, retell the story.

However, Takemoto-san did not shrink from the challenge that was my novel series. It was no small feat.

Personally, when I look into Erin's eyes on the cover, I see Takemoto-san's eyes. Takemoto-san is a bundle of spunk, so I'm pleased to see the same spirit reflected in Erin.

Here's hoping you will enjoy the ride and see where it takes you.

Uehashi Nahoko



When their favorite book is being adapted to a visual medium, like a manga or an animation, readers naturally have expectations and fears. That's because with novels each reader interprets the text differently.

As the person in charge of the manga adaptation of Kemono no Souja, I pull images from my head and put them to paper. But some days, my art doesn't live up to my own imagination and I struggle. Being a fan of the novels myself puts a weight on my shoulders, but I've gotten used to it, I think? *shifty eyes*

Uehashi Nahoko has thanked me profusely. Yes, I did go into this challenge thing headlong, but I would love for you to stick it out with me.

Thank you so much.

Uehashi Nahoko-sensei, my editors Nagaoka-sama and Sugiyama-sama, Fujiwara Apiary (for the interview) Eto-san, Oosuga-san, Katayari-san, Chizu-san, Matsuura-san, Moegi-san, Runa-san, my supportive friends, my parents, and the readers,

my thanks go to all of you!

Takemoto Itoe

Kemono no Souja
The Beast Player

VOLUME I

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